

House File 2078 - Introduced

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BY LATHAM

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to civil liability of sports officials,
2 providing criminal penalties for assault of sports
3 officials, and including effective date and applicability
4 provisions.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 671B.1 Definition.

2 "*Sports official*" means the same as defined in section
3 708.3A.

4 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 671B.2 Sports officials — limitation
5 of liability.

6 A sports official who officiates an athletic contest at any
7 level of competition in this state shall not be liable to any
8 person in any civil action for injuries or damages claimed to
9 have arisen due to actions or inactions within the confines of
10 the athletic facility at which the athletic contest is played
11 related in any manner to the sports official's officiating
12 duties.

13 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. 671B.3 Sports officials — liability
14 protection not applicable.

15 This chapter does not apply to a sports official who causes
16 injury or damage to a person by actions or inactions that are
17 intentional, malicious, or grossly negligent.

18 Sec. 4. Section 708.3A, subsections 1, 2, 3, and 4, Code
19 2024, are amended to read as follows:

20 1. A person who commits an assault, as defined in section
21 708.1, against a peace officer, jailer, correctional staff,
22 member or employee of the board of parole, health care
23 provider, employee of the department of health and human
24 services, employee of the department of revenue, national
25 guard member engaged in national guard duty or state active
26 duty, civilian employee of a law enforcement agency, civilian
27 employee of a fire department, or fire fighter, whether paid
28 or volunteer, with the knowledge that the person against
29 whom the assault is committed is a peace officer, jailer,
30 correctional staff, member or employee of the board of parole,
31 health care provider, employee of the department of health and
32 human services, employee of the department of revenue, national
33 guard member engaged in national guard duty or state active
34 duty, civilian employee of a law enforcement agency, civilian
35 employee of a fire department, ~~or~~ fire fighter, or sports

1 official, and with the intent to inflict a serious injury
2 upon the peace officer, jailer, correctional staff, member or
3 employee of the board of parole, health care provider, employee
4 of the department of health and human services, employee of
5 the department of revenue, national guard member engaged in
6 national guard duty or state active duty, civilian employee
7 of a law enforcement agency, civilian employee of a fire
8 department, ~~or~~ fire fighter, or sports official, is guilty of a
9 class "D" felony.

10 2. A person who commits an assault, as defined in section
11 708.1, against a peace officer, jailer, correctional staff,
12 member or employee of the board of parole, health care
13 provider, employee of the department of health and human
14 services, employee of the department of revenue, national
15 guard member engaged in national guard duty or state active
16 duty, civilian employee of a law enforcement agency, civilian
17 employee of a fire department, ~~or~~ fire fighter, or sports
18 official, whether paid or volunteer, who knows that the person
19 against whom the assault is committed is a peace officer,
20 jailer, correctional staff, member or employee of the board
21 of parole, health care provider, employee of the department
22 of health and human services, employee of the department of
23 revenue, national guard member engaged in national guard duty
24 or state active duty, civilian employee of a law enforcement
25 agency, civilian employee of a fire department, ~~or~~ fire
26 fighter, or sports official, and who uses or displays a
27 dangerous weapon in connection with the assault, is guilty of a
28 class "D" felony.

29 3. A person who commits an assault, as defined in section
30 708.1, against a peace officer, jailer, correctional staff,
31 member or employee of the board of parole, health care
32 provider, employee of the department of health and human
33 services, employee of the department of revenue, national
34 guard member engaged in national guard duty or state active
35 duty, civilian employee of a law enforcement agency, civilian

1 employee of a fire department, ~~or~~ fire fighter, or sports
2 official, whether paid or volunteer, who knows that the person
3 against whom the assault is committed is a peace officer,
4 jailer, correctional staff, member or employee of the board
5 of parole, health care provider, employee of the department
6 of health and human services, employee of the department of
7 revenue, national guard member engaged in national guard duty
8 or state active duty, civilian employee of a law enforcement
9 agency, civilian employee of a fire department, ~~or~~ fire
10 fighter, or sports official, and who causes bodily injury or
11 mental illness, is guilty of an aggravated misdemeanor.

12 4. Any other assault, as defined in [section 708.1](#), committed
13 against a peace officer, jailer, correctional staff, member or
14 employee of the board of parole, health care provider, employee
15 of the department of health and human services, employee of
16 the department of revenue, national guard member engaged in
17 national guard duty or state active duty, civilian employee
18 of a law enforcement agency, civilian employee of a fire
19 department, ~~or~~ fire fighter, or sports official, whether paid
20 or volunteer, by a person who knows that the person against
21 whom the assault is committed is a peace officer, jailer,
22 correctional staff, member or employee of the board of parole,
23 health care provider, employee of the department of health and
24 human services, employee of the department of revenue, national
25 guard member engaged in national guard duty or state active
26 duty, civilian employee of a law enforcement agency, civilian
27 employee of a fire department, ~~or~~ fire fighter, or sports
28 official, is a serious misdemeanor.

29 Sec. 5. Section 708.3A, subsection 5, Code 2024, is amended
30 by adding the following new paragraph:

31 NEW PARAGRAPH. *Oh.* "Sports official" means an individual
32 who serves as a referee, umpire, or linesman, or in a similar
33 capacity, at any athletic contest, and who is a member of
34 or registered with a local, state, regional, or national
35 organization that is engaged, in part, in providing education

1 and training to referees, umpires, linesman, or persons in
2 similar capacities.

3 Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act, being deemed of immediate
4 importance, takes effect upon enactment.

5 Sec. 7. APPLICABILITY. The following apply to legal actions
6 commenced after the effective date of this Act, including legal
7 actions that allege actions or inactions of a sports official
8 that occurred prior to the effective date of this Act:

- 9 1. The section of this Act enacting section 671B.1.
- 10 2. The section of this Act enacting section 671B.2.
- 11 3. The section of this Act enacting section 671B.3.

12 EXPLANATION

13 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
14 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

15 This bill provides that a sports official who officiates
16 an athletic contest at any level of competition in Iowa shall
17 not be liable to any person in any civil action for injuries
18 or damages claimed to have arisen due to actions or inactions
19 within the confines of the athletic facility at which the
20 athletic contest is played related in any manner to the sports
21 official's officiating duties. This provision does not apply
22 to a sports official who causes injury or damage to a person
23 by actions or inactions that are intentional, malicious, or
24 grossly negligent. The bill applies to legal actions commenced
25 after the effective date of the bill, including legal actions
26 that allege actions or inactions of a sports official that
27 occurred prior to the effective date of the bill.

28 The bill provides that a person who commits an assault
29 against a sports official, with the knowledge that the person
30 against whom the assault is committed is a sports official,
31 and with the intent to commit a serious injury, is guilty of a
32 class "D" felony. The bill provides that a person who commits
33 an assault against a sports official, who knows that the person
34 against whom the assault is committed is a sports official, and
35 who uses or displays a dangerous weapon in connection with the

1 assault, is guilty of a class "D" felony. The bill provides
2 that a person who commits an assault against a sports official,
3 who knows that the person against whom the assault is committed
4 is a sports official, and who causes bodily injury or mental
5 illness, is guilty of an aggravated misdemeanor. The bill
6 provides that any other assault committed against a sports
7 official by a person who knows that the person against whom
8 the assault is committed is a sports official is a serious
9 misdemeanor. A class "D" felony is punishable by confinement
10 for no more than five years and a fine of at least \$1,025 but
11 not more than \$10,245. An aggravated misdemeanor is punishable
12 by confinement for no more than two years and a fine of at
13 least \$855 but not more than \$8,540. A serious misdemeanor is
14 punishable by confinement for no more than one year and a fine
15 of at least \$430 but not more than \$2,560.

16 The bill defines "sports official" as an individual who
17 serves as a referee, umpire, or linesman, or in a similar
18 capacity, at any athletic contest, and who is a member of
19 or registered with a local, state, regional, or national
20 organization that is engaged, in part, in providing education
21 and training to sports officials.

22 The bill takes effect upon enactment.